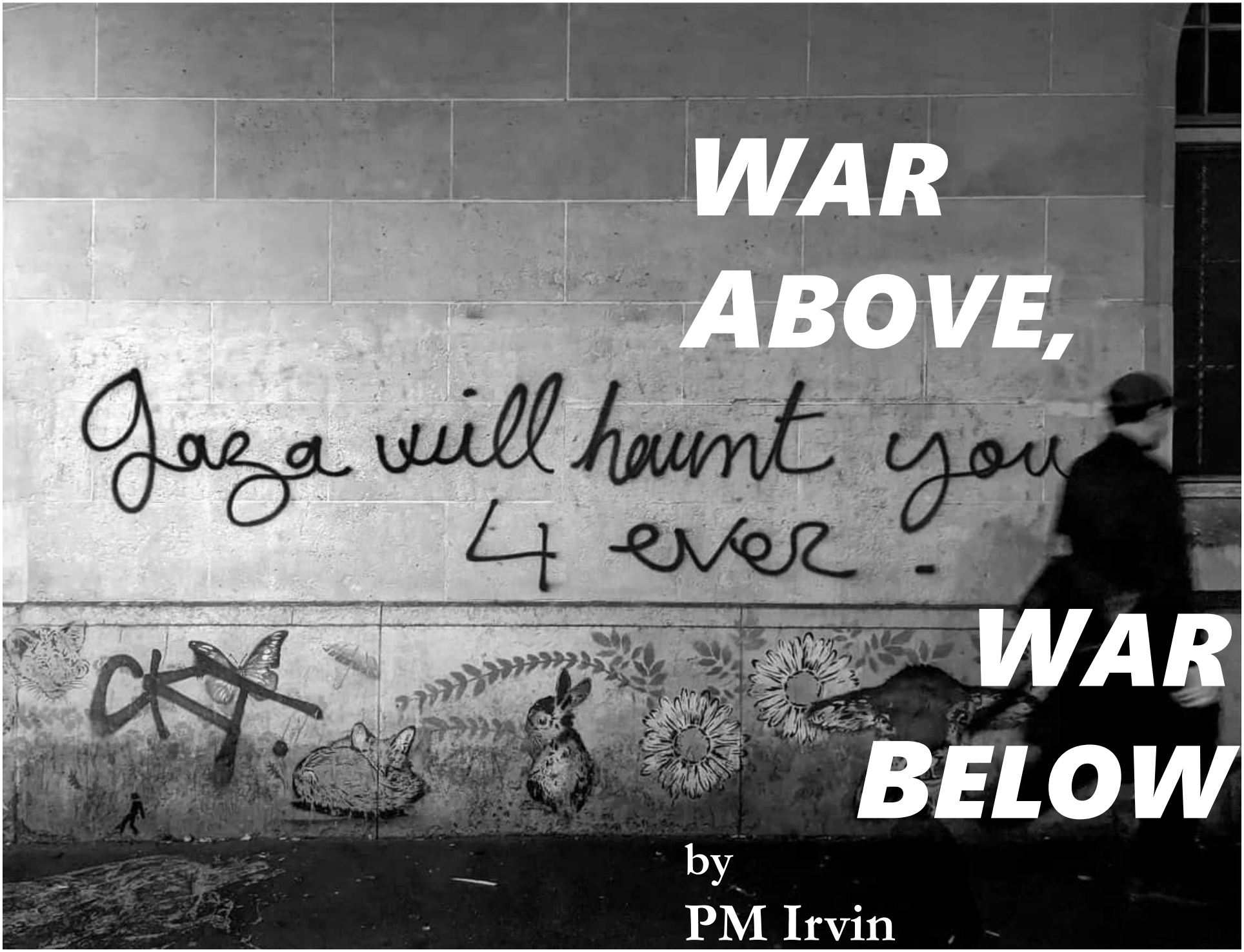

WAR ABOVE, WAR BELOW

by

PM Irvin

occupation by all available means, including armed struggle." Yet the right to struggle against colonial and imperial domination is more fundamental than what is written into international law. It is the struggle for life itself.

The armed struggle for the liberation of Palestine has definite historical actors and is supported by regional resistance forces, all of which have been smeared and condemned by imperialists, "imperialist running dogs," and anti–anti-imperialists alike. They want Palestinians to simply submit to brutal oppression or be ethnically cleansed from their homeland. Yet the Palestinian struggle for the liberation of their homeland from colonial domination and imperialist rule continues in spite of such colonial fury. This struggle must be supported at all costs, as the struggle for Palestine is the struggle for life itself.

On the other hand, if world imperialism, led by the united states, aims to continue the long war of the white world against the wretched of the earth, then "World War it will be, no matter what we say or do. The world will never submit again to Anglo-Saxon rule."

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is not reducible to "non-reformist reforms" or "revolutionary reforms," which are "oxymorons." On the horizon is *revolution*.

"Revolution" means the overthrow of the existing order and the abolition of all institutions which support it. An anti-systemic revolution paves the way for organizing society to meet human and ecological need, rather than organizing society for the maximization of private profit. We want the liberation of the productive forces from capitalist control; we want land reform, and socialized education, housing, and healthcare; we want the right of oppressed peoples to narrate their histories, to maintain their cultures, to self-determination—and freedom from capitalist extraction and colonial/imperial oppression forevermore. What we want, then, is a "world without war." Self-determination is the meaning of freedom. And if the oppressed peoples of the world want freedom *by any means necessary*, then the path forward is *revolution* against capitalism.

In 1965, Amilcar Cabral wrote:

> We are with the refugees, the martyred refugees of Palestine who have been ridiculed, and expelled from their homeland by imperialist maneuvers. We stand with the Palestinian refugees and *we support everything that the children of Palestine do to free their country*, and we support with all our might all that the Arab and African countries do to aid the Palestinian people to recover its dignity, its independence, and its right to life.

That Palestinians have a fundamental right to struggle against zionist colonialism and u.s.-led imperialism by any means necessary is reaffirmed by the United Nations' Resolution 45/130 of 1990, which acknowledged "the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for independence, territorial integrity, national unity and liberation from colonial domination, apartheid and foreign

Capital Is Murder

Capital was soaked in blood, steeped in urine, and "dripping from every pore" as it emerged from myriad colonial genocides perpetuated by white europe. With the colonization of the amerikas, the world was divided in two: the "white" and civilized european versus the "dark" and uncivilized savage. With the color line and its attendant concept of race established by force in the amerikas, colonial war and the enslavement of Afrikans became foundational pillars for capitalism as a world-system. Yet faced with revolt against the system, W. E. B. Du Bois notes that the white masters of the world abandoned the slave trade in favor of "controlling labor in Africa and Asia," which was the birth of modern imperialism. Motivated by capital accumulation at all costs, white europe in the nineteenth century divided the Afrikan continent amongst themselves to exploit land, labor, and natural resources of the Indigenous. With rare exceptions, the continent of Afrika was colonized by europe and the white world fought to maintain colonial subjugation. Colonial genocide and the subjugation of the darker nations was the order of the day. Murder, rape, and pillage of entire continents by white europe created and sustained modern imperialism. This has been a long war waged by the white world against the world's oppressed races.

Meanwhile, the united states developed as an imperialist power out of the crushing of Reconstruction. With settler-colonial westward expansion, Jim Crow, segregation, and white mob violence, white supremacy has always reigned supreme in the united states. Moreover, while Western europe was severely weakened after two world wars, the united states remained relatively unscathed. Thus, after flexing its imperialist muscle by dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the united states emerged from the war as the world's leading imperialist

power. Since 1945, u.s. imperialism has led the world in the destruction of humanity and nature through militarism and waste. From waging outright war in Vietnam, Korea, Persia (now Iran), Iraq, and Afghanistan, to covert, hybrid, and cold war against innumerable countries in Latin Amerika, Asia, Afrika, and Eastern europe, the united states has eagerly carried on the white world's legacy of waging war to fuel capital accumulation on a world scale. By deploying techniques of counter-insurgent warfare against domestic populations in the form of prisons, police, and covert f.b.i. and c.i.a. operations against target populations, the united states wars not only internally against its internal colonies and radicals of various stripes, but also externally, against subjugated nations in the Global South. In the capitalist world economy, it is u.s. imperialism that reigns supreme as it accelerates the white world's long war against the oppressed peoples of the world.

Today, the white world gravitates toward imperialist war, ecological destruction, and maintaining a global economic system through force and coercive measures whereby various "dark" populations in the Global South live roughly decades less than various "white" populations in the Global North. This arrangement is not merely historically contingent, but artificial; indeed, Kadri argues that the maintenance of this arrangement on a world scale amounts to the structural genocide of oppressed peoples across the globe. The united states leads the "civilizing mission" of european colonialism by maintaining world imperialism. Just as in the twentieth century, the problem of the twenty-first century is the problem of the color line.

Paper Tigers, Spider's Webs

October 7th laid bare these contradictions before the world. In a calculated ghetto uprising akin to a slave revolt, Palestinian

and the Western imperial states; workers in the imperial core who benefit from and thereby retain a commitment to the imperial world order both espouse anti–anti-imperialism and enforce it to quell opposition to their way of life. Moreover, by decrying anti-imperialists in myriad ways, many on the left stabilize and defend Western imperialist projects and therefore engage in what Gerald Horne calls "left-wing white nationalism." By bludgeoning, decrying, and smearing anti-imperialism in thought and practice, Western leftists find themselves allied with and committed to upholding world imperialism, which is a form of "class collaboration" with the imperialists. By remaining amenable to Western imperialism in certain contexts, anti–anti-imperialists find themselves aligned with white world supremacy, airbrushing radical politics in the service of world imperialism.

As contradictions heighten and as domestic repression booms, anti-imperialists must remain steadfast in the face of counter-insurgent efforts to subvert our struggle against imperialism on all fronts, whether politically or economically, ideologically or culturally. The struggle against u.s.-led imperialism is the struggle of the greater part of humanity for liberation from white power on a world scale.

Intifada Until Victory!

For the white world to relinquish its grip on the land, labor, and natural resources of the world's "darker" nations, we must struggle against white world supremacy *by any means necessary*. Moreover, because this war has been initiated, maintained, and developed by the white world, the oppressed masses of people have the right to self-defense, including resistance *by any means necessary*, and on every level—social, political, economic, and cultural. The demand for liberation is not reform, and liberation

adorned themselves in radical aesthetics, either with no real fidelity to anti-imperialism or outright hostility to anti-imperialist politics. We must distinguish our friends from our enemies; the underdevelopment of anti-imperialist consciousness is a problem of the Western left, but it is one that must be remedied by deepened commitment and political education. But left-wing opposition toward anti-imperialism is another matter; in a class alignment with world imperialism, our friends on the left are the active participants in the oppression of workers and peasants in Asia, Latin Amerika, and Afrika, namely "that basic majority of workers who are yellow, brown and black."

While anti-imperialists must struggle against the imperialists from above, so too must we struggle against counter-insurgency from below—even within the left. We must understand our political situation as a war on two fronts, against world imperialism and against anti–anti-imperialism.

Widely prevalent among the Western left but not exclusive to it, anti–anti-imperialism is the opposition to anti-imperialism both theoretically and in practice across political, economic, cultural, and ideological spheres. A form of anti-radicalism and related to anti-communism, anti–anti-imperialism includes the counter-insurgent opposition to anti-imperialist politics, inclusive of smearing, marginalization, mischaracterization, intellectual disengagement from anti-imperialism or fierce opposition to it. Not only does anti–anti-imperialism serve world imperialism by fomenting discontent among the masses with forces opposing empire, but it is used as a bludgeon to stifle opposition to imperialist foreign policy. Thus, anti–anti-imperialism aims to quell dissent against and resistance to imperialism, paving the way for further imperialist domination and exploitation.

Anti–anti-imperialism is not merely deployed by the imperialists

resistance forces broke through the prison walls of Gaza. The military offensive by the Palestinian resistance revealed that for all of its colonial posturing as an invincible and untouchable outpost of Western imperialism, now led by the united states, 'israel' was in fact a paper tiger, weaker than a spider's web. This ignited a massively accelerated genocidal campaign whereby 'israel' unleashed counter-insurgent genocidal war, immediately starving the Palestinian population in Gaza by force, and began subjecting Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank to the world's most inhumane forms of cruelty and brutality. Such violence has only been expanded over time, including 'israel' torturing Palestinians in concentration camps like Sde Teiman and systematically using sexual violence on Palestinians as a weapon of war.

In collective punishment against Palestinians in the form of counter-insurgent genocidal war, 'israel's' aim is explicitly to crush Palestinian resistance to zionist colonialism, with the repeated expression of the colonial desire to "destroy Hamas." The goal remains to impose political defeat on colonized Palestinians, either by murdering them or by drilling into their minds that self-determination is impossible, and resistance to zionist colonialism and world imperialism is futile. This "civilizing mission" was extended as 'israel' expanded its genocidal campaign into a regional war, complete with involvement in overthrowing Syria (Netanyahu claimed responsibility for this) and colonial incursion into Syrian territory.

The zionist occupation of Syria has been virtually unopposed by the new Syrian regime led by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), a rebranded Al Qaeda which has committed mass killings and other atrocities against religious minorities since seizing state power. As the dust settles, Syria is poised to become a neo-colony of u.s.-led imperialism, and one which is subject to ongoing zionist colonial occupation. All this has been enabled by our friends on

the left, who have celebrated the victory of zionism and u.s.-led imperialism in overthrowing Syria and installing HTS (Al Qaeda in a suit).

zionism, beholden to world imperialism, has aimed to impose not only military but political and ideological defeat not only in Palestine, but across the Arab-Iranian region. Yet such plans are doomed to fail; Palestinian resistance to zionist colonialism and u.s.-led imperialism has persisted unflinchingly and unceasingly. Moreover, Palestinian resistance forces have been assisted logistically and militarily by allied resistance forces in the Arab-Iranian region, despite zionist-imperialist attempts to crush resistance forces standing in the way of their "final solution." Resistance forces have continued fighting against zionism and u.s.-led imperialism despite being dealt a heavy blow through the fall of Syria, as well as their being subjected to genocidal war expanded into a regional war. This should come as no surprise, as "the process of liberation is irresistible and irreversible."

In its genocidal war, 'israel' has been aided and abetted, politically and militarily, by u.s. imperialism, with the united states supplying approximately a third of the entity's military budget in the first year of the genocide. But the genocide has also been materially and politically supported by the imperialist powers of the white world, including England, France, Germany, and kanada, as well as their allies. Despite the occasional mild critique, such as from France, none of these states recognize the genocide that is unfolding. None have withheld political or military support for 'israel.' All support its "right to exist." The white world—that is, the Western imperialist states and their allies—have consolidated support for the genocide unleashed on the Palestinian people by 'israel.' This is a continuation of the white world's long war on the world's oppressed races.

paves the way for self-determination—not merely politically and economically, but also culturally. Oppressed peoples have the right to articulate their own theory, as well as recount and maintain their own history. Since the imperialists have conquered thought by controlling the development of how theory and history are articulated and maintained, the counter-war against imperialism must also be waged on the ideological level in the service of building a revolutionary culture. As Cabral teaches us, "national liberation is necessarily an act of culture."

War Within

Max Ajl observes that in the Palestine solidarity movement in the Global North, several forms of anti-zionism have gained prominence which neglect national liberation, u.s.-led imperialism, and how Palestinian resistance forces are materially and logistically intertwined with other resistance forces in the region. Not only are such politics anathema to the historical and theoretical understanding that has been laid out by the historical agents of the Palestinian struggle, but in the time of monsters, liberal anti-zionisms amount to counter-insurgent politics. By obscuring the role of u.s.-led imperialism in maintaining 'israel,' forms of anti-zionism which ignore imperialism, national liberation, and regional dynamics are compatible with imperialism on a world scale.

Forms of anti-zionism which are compatible with imperialism are widespread. Various prominent organizations have professed their commitments to "anti-zionism" and even "anti-imperialism" while neglecting regional anti-systemic forces which are inextricable from the Palestinian liberation struggle. Such organizations enjoy significant clout, which was built on a mirage of radicalism. In particular, many in the North have

theory by imperialism into a compatible ideology. In response to the distortion of Marxism into a politics that denies imperialism, Kadri stresses the need to "decolonize Marx again." In other words, the world's oppressed peoples engaged in scientific socialist struggle have every right to articulate what Marx has meant to them and to the world. They will not be dictated to by Western Marxism. Kadri's call to decolonize Marx again is waging struggle both politically and ideologically, which is part and parcel of the struggle for self-determination against u.s.-led imperialism. That is simply the struggle for sovereignty at every level: social, political, economic, and cultural. Sovereignty in theoretical production is particularly important in revolutionary struggle, for as Cabral notes, "nobody has yet made a successful revolution without a revolutionary theory."

Sovereignty in the realm of intellectual production is an integral aspect of cultural sovereignty, which depends on "the inalienable right of every people to have their own history." For Cabral, culture plays an important role in national liberation struggles against colonial and imperialist domination, whether it be freedom for internal colonies in the belly of the beast or liberation for nations threatened by imperialist war, sanctions, or other forms of aggression. In articulating his theory of national liberation, Cabral contends that "national liberation takes place when, and only when, the national productive forces are completely free of all kinds of foreign domination."

Foreign domination by u.s.-led imperialism takes many forms, whether it be the artificial shortening of racialized peoples' lives through imposing conditions of immiseration, demonizing them as "communists" or now "terrorists" for wanting freedom, or subjecting them to myriad forms of imperialist war. Yet imperialism as such must be vanquished for the total liberation of the world's productive forces from capitalist domination. This

The imperialist support for 'israel' prompts Ali Kadri to remark that "the war on Gaza must be seen from the perspective of ratcheting up imperialist power in a strategic region. The whole history of colonizing Palestine is an aggression aimed at severing Asiatic from African masses, leaving the spoils to Europe." zionism is not merely colonialism for the benefit of the settlers; 'israel' plays an integral geo-strategic role in the capitalist world-system. As an outpost of u.s. imperialism, 'israel' enacts war on nations in Asia and Afrika and has provided material support for reactionary regimes in Latin Amerika as well as in Western and Eastern europe. Kadri is quite right that the existence of 'israel' further prevents peoples across Asia and Afrika oppressed by world imperialism from unification against their common enemy: the capitalist world-system, with oppressed peoples beaten into submission by u.s.-led imperialism.

In the final analysis, u.s.-led imperialism and its imperial outposts like 'israel' subjugate the "darker races" of the world to genocidal war. In Palestine, u.s. imperialism aids and abets 'israel' to freely commit genocidal horrors against indigenous Palestinians, and shields so-called 'israel' from accountability in the international arena. This is part of a broader strategy of genocidal war and regional de-development in the Arab-Iranian region through the War on Terror, which was inaugurated by the united states. Since 9/11, 4.5 to 4.7 million people have been killed in the War on Terror, and 38 million people forcibly displaced. The alliance between u.s.-led imperialism and 'israel,' then, is a match made in hell.

Palestinian resistance forces have long named world imperialism, as well as world zionism, the enemies of the Palestinian people. 'israel'—"the world's least consolidated settler-colonial regime"—has always been an appendage of the Western world in the service of global white supremacy. Recall that Herzl, the founding

father of political zionism, explicitly wrote that 'israel' would be a bulwark "of Europe against Asia, an outpost of *civilization* as opposed to *barbarism*." This quintessentially european sentiment was parroted by Benjamin Netanyahu, an architect of 'israel's' genocidal war on Gaza, who said explicitly that the genocide is justified as a "clash between barbarism and civilization."

The genocidal war against the Palestinian people waged by 'israel' and u.s.-led imperialism is part and parcel of the white Western world's long war against the oppressed races of the world. For the wretched of the earth, namely the nations oppressed by u.s.-led imperialism in the Global South and the internal colonies in the Global North, the highest phase of the class struggle is the struggle against white world supremacy, which treats them as barbarians and savages that need to be "civilized" by Western "civilization."

This state of war is asymmetric because it was not initiated by peoples oppressed by world imperialism. The white world inaugurated, maintained, and expanded this war over the course of five centuries by seeking capital accumulation at all cost. From genocide, enslavement, colonialism, imperialism, and repressing progressive anti-systemic forces all over the world, resistance against the war waged by the white world against the greater part of humanity is justified as self-defense.

The indictment against the Western world carries the weight of history: "*Europe is indefensible.*" And yet, oppressed peoples and their comrades will not win this war by shouting insults at it.

The Conquering of Thought

In the wake of a centuries-long war led by the white Western world against the "darker races," capital has expanded its reach across the globe, achieving political and economic control of the land, labor, and natural resources of vast masses of people across the world. On a world scale, this allows capital to accumulate in the hands of the few at any cost, including wasted lives and wasted nature, the destruction of entire nations and the planet's ecosystem.

But capital's novel accomplishment is that it has conquered thought. Du Bois observed in 1951 with the advent of myriad socialist and anti-colonial struggles, not least of which was the Chinese Revolution of 1949, that the white world launched a campaign of "world-wide propaganda, led by the United States, on a scale which put Hitler to shame" against communism, the period's leading form of struggle against the capitalist world-system. Part of the white world's crusade against communism is the development of "Western Marxism." In the Global North, Kadri notes that revolutionary forces have been largely eviscerated, with Marxism co-opted into an ideology which is compatible with imperialism.

Part of the white world's crusade against communism is the development of its techniques of counter-insurgency, a form of low-intensity warfare which aims to subvert and contain revolutionary politics writ large. The counter-insurgency deployed by the u.s. empire takes myriad forms domestically. On the one hand, the united states has refined techniques of counter-insurgent war against target domestic populations, particularly the revolutionary forces among its internal colonies. This is evident from the state's war against Black revolutionaries in the 1960s and 1970s, which involved infiltration, demonization, and the cooptation and brutal suppression of revolutionary politics. But on the other hand, revolutionary forces are suppressed at the ideological level, including the cooptation of revolutionary